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they are the most wonderful that have ever been brought out in the interest of science, but the theories must be taken with a grain of salt.

I now declare the present session adjourned.

THIRD SESSION

(Tonka Bay Hotel, Friday afternoon, June 26, 1908)

The third general session was called to order at 2:30 o'clock by Vice-president C. H. Gould and the Association at once passed to the consideration of reports from committees.

Dr E. C. RICHARDSON presented the

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

During the past year the Association has been represented at the meeting of the British library association by Mr Hanson and will be represented at the International historical congress at Berlin in August through a paper prepared by Mr J. C. M. Hanson of the Library of Congress and presented by Mr A. P. C. Griffin. The most noteworthy matter of the current year is the completion of the International cataloging rules, still farther advanced since their presentation in proof at Asheville through personal conference of Mr Hanson with British librarians. There have been a rather unusually large number of American librarians traveling among European libraries during the past year. The chairman of this committee following in the footsteps of Dr Putnam and Mr Hanson, found, especially in Germany, that their visits had been particularly fruitful in establishing those relationships of mutual understanding of one another's work on which the hope of extending international cooperation must chiefly rest. There does not seem any very tangible method at present of getting a universal understanding as to cataloging entry, but the matter of centralized cataloging and bureau of information work is becoming so well established abroad in connection

with the matter of international library loans that the printed card must logically follow in a short time and with it more consideration of international uniformity of entry. The Continent is as far ahead of us in the matter of international library loans as it is behind us, thanks to the Library of Congress, in central cataloging.

Respectfully submitted,
E. C. RICHARDSON,
Chairman.

The VICE-PRESIDENT: Unless objection is heard the report of the Committee on International relations will be accepted and placed on file.

Mr J. C. M. HANSON then read the

REPORT OF THE CATALOG RULES COMMITTEE

It will be recalled that with the report of 1907, its first regular report, the Committee submitted certain exhibits, chief of which was a copy of the Rules as revised to date and printed by the Library of Congress "as manuscript." In connection with the present report, the Committee submits a similar exhibit. This exhibit consists of a copy of the third revise of the entire body of rules with title-page, contents, introduction and various appendices, representing in its final form the body of rules agreed upon between the American Library Association and the Library Association. An examination of this proof will show that the various consultations between representatives of the two associations during 1905-1907 have finally resulted in a close agreement. Of 174 rules, only 8 show some variation and in regard to at least three of these, we have the strongest hopes that by further consultation and mutual concessions we shall be able to arrive at complete agreement before a second edition of the rules shall be called for. There is a distinct principle underlying these differences. Our British associates hold that authors, men or women, who are inconsiderate enough to change their names ought to be entered under their earliest

forms. We of the American committee, on the other hand, hold that it is safer to take the later form. Again, our British associates have decided that periodicals that change their titles should be entered under the earliest form. The American committee have decided in favor of the later form, with a brief entry and reference from the earlier title. This represents the differences in the rules on which we have not come to full agreement. Perhaps the main element responsible for the success of this agreement is the generosity and openness with which our proposals have invariably been met by our associates on the British committee. The kindly consideration which they have always shown to us throughout the negotiations I believe is mainly responsible for the fact that we have come to as full and complete an agreement as we have. As for the negotiations of the past year, it may here be sufficient to state that while the Committee has not held any meetings, much work has been done in connection with the preparations for the final printing now in progress. The Council in adopting the rules as submitted at the last annual meeting, authorized the Committee to proceed with such further negotiations as might be necessary in order to harmonize any differences as to details still existing between the British and American committees, and to definitely formulate the rules in final form. It also referred the question of printing and publication of the rules to the incoming Executive board. On Sept. 26th, the latter body voted: "That the printing of the Catalog rules be entrusted to the Publishing board in accordance with their letters of May 25, 1907, and September 10, 1907, and in conformity with the requirements of the Committee on Catalog rules."

In the mean time, the Chairman of the American committee had been in consultation with the British committee at Glasgow, Sept. 16-19.* An agreement was here reached on all rules but the eight mentioned

above. Preparations for final printing followed these agreements.

Owing to unavoidable delays in connection with final preparation of copy, the unusually difficult nature of the composition and proof reading and especially because of the time required to forward proofs to members of both Committees as also to await and correlate the many returns from these members, it has not been possible to have the book ready for distribution in time for the present conference. Orders may, however, be placed with the Publishing board at any time after the close of this meeting as the book is quite certain to be ready for distribution during July.

By special agreement between the Publishing board and the British committee, the former is also to print the British edition of 1000 copies. This is to be uniform with the American edition with the exception of slight variations in spelling and in that the British variants to certain rules will precede, the American rules taking the form of notes. In addition to the two editions of the main code, a simplified edition is in preparation under the direction of Miss Kroeger, the Secretary of the Committee, and Miss Hitchler, of the Brooklyn public library. Moreover, the Publishing board contemplates the issue of an edition on cards, a provision which was recommended by the Committee on condition that a sufficient number of subscriptions was received to justify the extra expenditure. It is thought that the cost of such an edition will not exceed \$3.

Finally, it may not be without interest to note that the consummation of the Anglo-American agreement embodied in the present rules, with special reference to its possible extention to other countries, is to form the subject of a paper at the International bibliographical conference at Brussels, in July, and possibly also before the Bibliographical section of the International historical congress, which convenes at Berlin, in August. This would indicate that also other nations are becoming interested in the problems connected with international cooperation in cataloging and are

*See Bulletin of the American Library Association, March, 1908.

casting about for some means whereby much of the duplication in cataloging necessitated by a lack of agreement on rules of entry and equipment of catalogs, may be obviated. An agreement between nations speaking different languages and with less interchange of literary output than between the United States and Great Britain is likely to prove difficult of summation. Still there is reason to hope that negotiations may lead to greater uniformity of entry and closer agreement on equipment, particularly as regards size of catalog cards, than exists at present. With more harmony of rules and a uniform size of card, it should be possible to arrive at some reciprocal agreement that would, in time, permit of a division of labor in the field of cataloging between different nations, especially with respect to composite works and the many important series of monographs which are now purchased by a large number of libraries in various parts of the world. Respectfully submitted,

J. C. M. HANSON, Chairman.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: You have heard this report, ladies and gentlemen, and I am sure that the Committee is to be thanked and the association congratulated upon the results that it embodies. Is there any discussion desired on the report?

Mr LEGLER: I desire to move that the thanks of the association be tendered to its Committee on Catalog rules for the work it has done during the past 8 years, and especially to Mr J. C. M. Hanson, who as chairman of the committee, has done more to bring the English and American committees into harmony, and has borne the burden of the final editing of the Code. Carried.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: There was one other report left over at the last meeting, that of the Committee on Bookbinding by the chairman, Mr A. L. BAILEY.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BOOKBINDING

Another year's work in the consideration of binding problems has brought

home to the Committee more forcibly than before the fact that these problems are difficult of solution, and that the small libraries everywhere and the larger libraries in the South and West are at a great disadvantage as regards binding.

The problems are difficult of solution because there is no one competent to say that a certain method in relation to any one question is the best one to follow. Sufficient time has not elapsed since experiments were begun by different libraries to show exactly what is best. In many cases the Committee can only insist on certain general principles—such as that no leather should be used unless the book is to receive hard wear—until more specific points can be determined after much time and experimentation. It should be noted also that no two librarians can be expected to agree on all binding questions, because the same books in libraries in neighboring towns will wear entirely different, and no hard and fast rule can be laid down. It is largely a matter of experience and judgment and librarians should spare no efforts to gain both.

The small library is the one which suffers most from binding difficulties. While some of the larger libraries are, doubtless, not spending their binding appropriation as economically as they might, they have, in the main, made their own experiments and they have arrived at more or less satisfactory results. The librarian of the small library on the other hand has so few books to bind that she does not realize the importance of the subject. She also has so many other duties to attend to that she cannot make a special study of binding and she is unable to get from any book all the information that she ought to have to enable her to recognize the difference between good binding and bad.

It is therefore the small library that the Committee hopes to benefit most, and one way in which it hopes to be of assistance is through the reinforced binding of popular fiction and juvenile books. This, with the assistance of librarians,

the Committee hopes to induce more publishers to give us. In fact the work done by the Committee on Binding during the present year has been confined almost wholly to the interest of reinforced binding. The first efforts of the Committee in 1906 to induce publishers to issue these bindings were made because of the exceedingly poor service that regular publishers' bindings were giving in public libraries. They were made, however, rather as an experiment to see what could be done along that line than from any strong belief in their value. The members of the Committee were not themselves convinced that it was the best solution of an intolerable situation. Reinforced bindings have now been in use for nearly two years, and we are able to judge more accurately of their value. In the January number of the "Bulletin" the Committee asked for an expression of opinion regarding these bindings. The responses received while not numerous were almost unanimously in favor of continuing the campaign. Only four librarians expressed doubt of their value, and two of these desired to see them continued so that the value of better bindings might be firmly impressed on the minds of all librarians.

Statistics of the wear of the book which has been in circulation longest (Smith's *Tides of Barnegat*) indicate far better results than the Committee had hoped for. In the exhibit of reinforced bindings at headquarters will be found a book from the Jacksonville (Fla.) public library which has circulated 96 times and is still in passable condition. Two other books will be found, one from Washington and the other from Newark, which have circulated 60 times and are still available for circulation. The Public library of the District of Columbia also sends records of 7 copies which have circulated from 57 to 70 times and are still in use. When we consider that the average publishers' binding has to be rebound before a book has circulated 25 times, or when we consider that many books circulate less than 90 times in the publishers' binding and

rebinding combined, we realize that in this particular case at least the library which bought this book made a most excellent investment of 10c., which is the increased cost of the book. Not only did the books remain in circulation at the height of their popularity, but in the case of libraries which bought several copies they have lasted so much beyond this period of popularity that many of them may be discarded when withdrawn from circulation instead of going to the bindery at an extra expense of 35 to 50c.

The arguments for and against these bindings and an explanation of the difficulty in getting them from the publishers have been explained thoroughly in previous reports, so that the Committee will not take up these points at the present time. It will simply say that it firmly believes that for the present, at least, binding bills will be cut down and the public better suited if all publishers can be induced to give us these bindings on books which are very popular.

The attitude of the publishers is much more favorable than it was two years ago. One firm has announced its intention of continuing the practice, making its own selection of books without calling upon our Committee for suggestions. So far as this publisher is concerned the troubles of the Committee are over. It has adopted our specifications and found that the plan pays. It is confidently hoped that other publishers will see the light before long.

While the library schools evidently desire to instil a knowledge of the importance of durable bindings, there seems to be a general tendency on the part of all of them—judging from answers to questions sent them in the fall—not to devote as much time to the subject as would be necessary to accomplish this result. Only one school has a special binding plant for the use of its students. Other schools visit bindaries and have processes explained, but it is doubtful if many library school graduates have a proper appreciation of the importance of the subject, or can recognize good bindings when they see them. Ap-

parently 8 hours is the longest time that any school requires to be devoted to binding courses. It is an indisputable fact that the repair and binding of books make big items in small appropriations, and the value of good bindings and the ability to recognize them should be thoroughly imbedded in the mind of the library school graduate.

There are a number of libraries throughout the country, especially in the South and West, where the prices charged by local binders are excessive and the quality of work rendered is exceedingly poor. In many cases it is impossible to send books outside the town or state for rebinding, and the situation, especially for those who realize the importance of good binding, is exceedingly annoying. There is one way, however, in which libraries so situated can obviate many difficulties. They can take particular care to order all books which are to receive hard wear in the special editions bound from the sheets. For example, one library in the South ordered the last volume of Poole bound from the sheets in pigskin. The Committee advocates such purchases whenever they are possible. The increase in the first cost of the book is considerable, but in the end the books will be found to be much cheaper.

During the year many binding questions have been submitted by librarians to the Committee. Such questions have been answered to the best of our ability and knowledge. While some of the points brought up are important, it would make this report much too long to discuss them here. The Committee, however, welcomes all binding questions, and when it has no solution for a question it will take measures to find one. It particularly desires librarians to send the titles of books that have proved exceptionally unsatisfactory in publisher's bindings. If many complaints of any one book are received, the Committee will take the matter up with the publisher and may be able to induce the publisher to improve the general quality of the binding, if not induce him to give a reinforced binding.

On June 1, 1908, a meeting was held in Washington, at the instigation of the Secretary of the Printing investigation committee, to discuss the binding of Government documents. There were present at that meeting the Chairman of the A. L. A. Committee on Federal relations, 3 representatives from the Library of Congress, the Librarian of the Public library of the District of Columbia, the acting Public printer, the Superintendent of documents, the head of the Bureau of standards, other government experts, and the Chairman of the Bookbinding committee. The conference resolved itself into a discussion of reports from Dr Stratton and Dr Douty of the Bureau of standards on tests of 23 samples of book cloths and buckrams submitted by three manufacturers. The reports of these two experts showed that in addition to very severe physical and chemical tests each sample was exposed to the attacks of water bugs. As a result of these experiments and tests the Bureau of standards gave rank to each sample submitted; a rank which was arrived at somewhat arbitrarily, but which for all practical purposes was satisfactory.

The qualities on which special emphasis was laid in assigning rank were tensile strength, the wear received in handling or shelving, the ability of the cloth to withstand folding, color, and the attack of water bugs. It was deemed important by all present at the conference that any cloth chosen for covering public documents must not fall below a certain minimum in any of these qualities.

The tests showed conclusively that three cloths ranking first were of nearly equal value. In the unanimous opinion, however, of all librarians present one of these three was much preferable to the other two. Accordingly before the conference adjourned it was put on record that those present favored the adoption of that particular cloth. It should be noted that at no time during the tests nor at the conference was the name of the cloth or the name of the manufacturer known to any one except the Secretary of the Printing investigation

committee. This cloth will undoubtedly be chosen for covering what has been known as the sheep bound set.

The result of this conference will be more beneficial and more far-reaching than at first appears. Not only has the United States government discarded the much berated sheep which it has used for 100 years or more in favor of a cloth which is clean and which will wear indefinitely, but in arriving at this result it has through the Bureau of standards established a standard for book cloths. The specifications for such a standard have not yet been formulated, but as soon as that has been done they will be published and every librarian in the country will be able to know what qualities a good cloth must possess. Not only will government documents be clothed respectably, but all library bindings where cloth is used will be immeasurably benefitted. Heretofore, book cloths have had to be accepted more or less on trust. As soon as the specifications have been formulated, librarians can bring immense pressure to bear on manufacturers to give us cloths that will stand severe tests.

In conclusion we call attention, as we are continually doing, to the fact that the cost of binding depends upon the wear it gives. A librarian may think that he is fortunate if he can get the ordinary novel rebound for 25c, but it should be noted that if books bound at that price circulate on an average only half as many times as books which cost 40c. to rebind, then the 25c. binding is much more expensive. It will pay all librarians to keep careful and accurate statistics of rebound books.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: If no discussion is desired and there is no opposing voice the report will be received and placed on file.

Dr B. C. STEINER then presented the

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE RELATIONS

Your Committee as appointed, consisted of Dr James H. Canfield of Columbia university, Bernard C. Steiner of the

Enoch Pratt free library, James Bain of the Public library of Toronto, R. R. Bowker of the "Library Journal," H. G. Wadlin of the Boston public library, and R. H. Whitten of the Library of the Public utilities commission of New York City. As Dr Canfield declined to serve upon the Committee, Dr Steiner became its Chairman. Mr Bowker resigned from the Committee in March, as he was about to take a European trip, and in his place, Mr Purd B. Wright of the Public library of St. Joseph, Mo., was appointed. Mr Wadlin has taken no part in the work of the Committee, and has answered none of the letters which have been sent him by the Chairman, so the report has not been submitted to him. Mr Bain's regrettable illness prevented him from being able to sign the report.

As this is the first year of the Committee's existence, its work has been naturally, of a somewhat tentative character. Two general considerations present themselves as the result of the year's work. The field covered by the Committee should be divided among two or three committees. Canadian affairs are so different from those of the United States, that the same committee cannot well handle the two classes of questions. During the past year the Committee has taken up no Canadian work, and consequently has been unable to avail itself of the services of Mr Bain. We recommend that a special committee be appointed to consider the relations of libraries with the Canadian governments. It is also a question as to whether a separate committee ought not to be named to take under its care, relations with the state governments, and thus leave the consideration of federal affairs alone to this Committee.

During the year the only service rendered by the Committee in connection with the state governments was done by Dr Steiner, who spent several days in Richmond, Va., at the invitation of the state librarian there, to discuss the best methods of administering that important library.

Your Committee also feels that its membership should be more widely distributed geographically, than was the case last year. Of the original members, three lived in New York state, one in Maryland, one in Massachusetts and one in Canada. We believe that there should be one member from New England, one from the Middle Atlantic states, one from the South, and one from the West, with additional members added from any section as the Association may think best.

In connection with the federal government, your committee has taken up a considerable number of matters.

The Chairman, in the course of visits to Washington, has conferred with the Superintendent of documents, the Commissioner of education, and the Librarian of the Bureau of education, with reference to the best methods of the work of these offices, in connection with libraries.

The Congressional committee on Printing conferred with the Chairman upon the new method of distribution of Public documents, and upon the proper material to use in binding them.

The Chairmen of the Congressional committees on Post offices and post roads were notified of the support given by the Association to bills for library and parcels posts, a detailed account of which is given in the Bulletin of the American Library Association for March, 1908.

The instructions of the Association, with reference to any new copyright law, have been carefully carried out, as is shown in the same number of the Bulletin. On March 27, the Chairman of the Committee appeared, as a representative of the Association, before the Joint committees on Patents and protested against any further limitations upon library importations not contained in the bill reported to the last Congress. When Mr Washburn introduced a copyright bill on May 5 (H. R. 21592), protest was promptly made against restrictive provisions contained in that Bill. We believe that, as a result of the efforts of librarians, we have satisfactory assurances from the chairmen of the

Congressional committees, Messrs Smoot and Currier, that we need anticipate no hostile legislation in this matter. The Committee has endeavored to secure the discontinuance of the vexatious receipt now required on importation of books. Mr Bowker was particularly active in this matter, and we regret that we cannot report success.

Complaint having been made as to the wording of the postal card containing a fine notice issued by one of our leading libraries, the matter was referred to the Committee and, after conference with the authorities of the Department of justice and the Post office department, a modified form for such postal cards was suggested to libraries, in the "Bulletin" for March.

It was the privilege of the Chairman of the Committee to address the District of Columbia library association upon the subject of the Relations of libraries to federal government, on April 8.

On June 1 the Chairman of the Committee met in conference at Washington, certain federal officers, at which conference the binding of Congressional documents in the future, was discussed and determined upon. Mr Arthur L. Bailey, Chairman of the Bookbinding committee, was also present and you are respectfully referred to his report for a detailed account of the proceedings. The summons of Mr Bailey and the Chairman of this Committee to the conference was a grateful tribute by the federal authorities, to the importance of the library interest.

BERNARD C. STEINER,
Chairman.

The PRESIDENT: Is there any business arising out of this report to discuss? If not the chair will entertain a motion for its adoption.

Mr BOWERMAN: I move its adoption. Seconded and carried.

The PRESIDENT: The next is Miss Hasse's report for the Committee on Public documents which, in the absence of the Chairman of the Committee will be read by the Secretary.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

Your Committee on Documents regrets not to be able to present a specific report to you of the occurrences of the past year relating to documents. The fault is entirely with the Chairman of the Committee who has been too much engaged with documents to draft a report on documents. It is acknowledged that this is no excuse, but it is hoped that the Association may accept it as a reason for the defection.

The question has arisen of a reorganization of the document interests of the Association. It has been suggested that a closer combination would be more effective than the present arrangement. Besides the Committee on Documents, the Association now has a Committee on State and Federal relations and a Committee on International relations. The former of these committees can lay claim to questions which concern state and federal documents where they affect library interests. The latter can with propriety concern itself with foreign documents. In addition to these committees there is the affiliated Association of state librarians.

There is no unanimity in the Committee on Documents on this question. At this time of writing members have expressed themselves in direct opposition to the discharge of amalgamation of the Documents committee, some in favor of such action, several have referred the matter back to the chairman, and some have sent equivocal replies to the chairman's memorandum.

In this status the matter is referred to the Association.

Respectfully submitted,
A. R. HASSE, Chairman,
Committee on Documents.

June 6, 1908.

No objection arising the report was accepted and Mr C. R. DUDLEY presented the

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY ARCHITECTURE

In the report of the Committee on Library architecture made at the last con-

ference it was stated that more than 100 plans of library buildings had been collected at headquarters and it was recommended that an appropriation be made for properly displaying them, also that each one be evaluated by its librarian and a card index prepared with such subject analysis as would enable any one to find quickly the plans of each class of buildings, or comments on the particular features he might be interested in.

After the office of executive officer was abolished it became impossible to prosecute the work of collecting plans so well begun by Mr Hovey and little has been accomplished since the Asheville meeting. It goes without saying that a committee, scattered across the country (no two of whom are in the same city) cannot successfully carry on such an undertaking. It can be done only at headquarters and by a paid assistant. A few weeks ago we were notified by the Secretary of the Association that if we would formulate sets of questions to be sent to the architects and librarians whose plans are on file, arrangements would be made to have the information obtained made available. This will be done.

It should be impressed upon the members to whom these inquiry blanks are sent, that it is of the utmost importance that they cooperate with the committee by giving in detail all the information called for regarding the merits and defects of the building under their care.

In our conferences nearly every subject relating to libraries except that of architecture, has been given serious and oft-recurring consideration by the master minds of the Association. At San Francisco Mr Soule presented the 20 points of agreement among librarians on library architecture, which after discussion were adopted as embodying the views of this organization. Two years ago there was a valuable symposium on the subject; otherwise it has never been given the prominence of a major topic. We firmly believe that it is now the most important one with which the profession has to deal and that a cam-

paign of education should be begun, not only for the benefit of librarians and trustees but for architects as well.

Travel from one ocean to the other and from the Lakes to the Gulf and you will find a rare set of men and women earnestly engaged in making their libraries of the greatest use to their communities. In such a trip you will find few economically arranged library buildings. The books are well selected, have been bought with good business judgment, are intelligently classified and cataloged but the cost of administration is out of proportion to the amount of work done because the building is not properly planned.

The first requisite for a library is a good librarian and one of the first qualifications of a librarian should be a knowledge of what constitutes a good library building, coupled with the ability to furnish an architect with a proper floor arrangement. The proportion of library buildings to churches, school houses, and business structures is very small. A city of 25,000 inhabitants might have a half dozen schools, 10 churches and 200 buildings for mercantile purposes and only one library; hence there is little inducement for architects to spend the time necessary to acquaint themselves with the requirements for a perfect library building.

Within the past decade a few have made a special study of this branch and have designed creditable buildings. But taken as a whole, they are bad, because utility has, in most cases, been sacrificed to alleged art. We believe that this, however, is more the fault of the librarians than of the architects.

The remedy for this evil must be a more specific knowledge of the subject by librarians. The question then arises "How can this end be attained?"

The literature is meager—few books have been written on it. The architectural journals publish elevations and floor plans, but as a rule do not criticize them.

We believe that most can be accomplished by continuing the work of making a large and representative collection of de-

signs, having them properly evaluated and then putting this information into print in proper form—an undertaking which would probably be the prerogative of our Publishing board.

C. R. DUDLEY,
Chairman.

The report of the Committee on Library architecture was received and its suggestion relating to the representation of the subject of library buildings upon the program was referred to the Program committee.

The following communication, serving as a report of the Committee on Cooperation with the National education association, was then read by the SECRETARY.

Chicago, June 22, 1908.
Mr. J. I. Wyer, Secretary,

American Library Association.

My dear Mr Wyer: The discussions of the Committee on Cooperation between the A. L. A and the N. E. A. have been held entirely through correspondence. The discussion has largely centered around the question of a joint meeting of the two associations in the near future. The lateness of the reply of one member which was received after your sessions had begun, of course, renders it impossible for this Committee to hope for much consideration of this matter at the present meeting, but may be a valuable suggestion to the Committee which follows. Other valuable suggestions were offered by members of the Committee but there was no unity of opinion arrived at. One member of the Committee *only* failed to respond to letters.

Very respectfully yours,
IRENE WARREN,

Chairman of Committee on Cooperation
between A. L. A. and N. E. A.

Dr BERNARD C. STEINER then read the

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON BOOK-BUYING

This Committee, in the past year had the first change in its membership for a num-

ber of years. The election of its former Chairman, Mr Arthur E. Bostwick, as President of the American Library Association left a vacancy in the Committee which was filled by the appointment of Mr W. P. Cutter of the Forbes library of Northampton, Mass. Mr J. C. Dana of the Newark public library, who had been the second in membership of the old committee, became Chairman and Dr Bernard C. Steiner of the Enoch Pratt free library continued as a member. Mr Dana's departure for Europe early in April, caused Dr Steiner to become Acting Chairman of the Committee, and threw the responsibility of its work upon the other two members, during the last portion of the year.

Only two bulletins of the Committee were issued during the year: no. 34 in January, and no. 35 in March, and these were printed in the "Bulletin of the American Library Association," and 3000 reprints of each were distributed in quantities to state library commissions and library schools, and by the single copy to librarians not likely to be reached by the "Bulletin" because not members of the Association. The diminished appropriation to the Committee seriously hampered its work. We believe that work to be so important that we renew the recommendation made in previous years, that the appropriation be increased to \$200 for the coming year. Bulletin no. 34 contained a letter of some length, addressed by the Committee to the American publishers' association, in the hope of establishing closer relations between the two organizations. We received a prompt answer from that Association, notifying us that a committee composed of Messers F. N. Doubleday and F. A. Stokes was appointed to confer with us. It proved impossible to have this conference until May, when we met the Committee in New York City. At the conference, not only Messrs Doubleday and Stokes of the American publishers' association, and Messrs Cutter and Steiner of our Committee, were present, but also we were fortunate enough to have with us Mr Bostwick, the President of our Association.

There was considerable interchange of ideas regarding the desirable characteristics of books from the library point of view, and with reference to methods of apprising libraries promptly as to the nature of new books. It was suggested by the representatives of the Publishers' association that they would like to have three or four conferences annually with our Committee, and we hope that this will be the first of many gatherings of the sort, to discuss questions of mutual interest.

The firm of Houghton Mifflin & co. took up our letter to the Publishers' association and Mr R. L. Scaife, their representative, wrote a letter to Mr Dana which, with the Committee's reply was summarized in Bulletin no. 35. Further correspondence with Messrs Scaife and Doubleday led to an interesting experiment by the Committee. We determined that we would prepare reports upon a few new books and send them to the publishers, to Mr Cedric Chivers, and to the following journals: "A. L. A. Booklist," "Library Journal," "Public Libraries," "Publishers' Weekly." These reports should contain a full statement as to the literary and physical character of the books. Two books were submitted to us by Houghton, Mifflin & co. and one by Doubleday, Page & co. We determined to publish only such reports as were favorable to the purchase of the books by practically all libraries, and, consequently, we did not publish a report upon one of the books. Reports on the other two, Palmer's "Life of Alice Freeman Palmer," and Doubleday's Large print library edition of Reade's "Love me little love me long," which we were able to commend highly, were published in the "Publishers' Weekly" for May 9, "Public Libraries" for June and the "Library Journal" for May. This experiment was most interesting, and, I hope, may lead to other similar reports. We believe that in this way a very important service can be rendered to libraries. Such reports should help the sale of good books, and bring them to the attention of libraries which might otherwise fail to purchase them. It

is hoped that many such reports may be made in the future, and that through the work of the Association, librarians may be informed as to the character and contents of books published, and publishers may receive information valuable to them with reference to the character of books needed by libraries. In the first volume of Doubleday's Large print library, a request was made for recommendations for titles to be included. We find considerable interest among publishers with reference to the books which may well be reprinted and suggest that librarians send to the Bookbuying committee from time to time, lists of such books as are in demand but are not to be found in any available edition. One of the great needs of the publishers of the present day, as is confessed by them, is a satisfactory means of getting their books before the public. In many smaller towns there is no book store, and even in large cities the books are not brought to the attention of persons who may become buyers. The library has great possibilities as a purveyor of such samples, and already is beginning to assist in this way. In Baltimore a number of medical book publishers send to the library of the Medical and chirurgical faculty of Maryland, in Baltimore, a copy of each book published by them, which copy being placed upon exhibition has induced physicians in many cases to order the books for their own libraries. A considerable number of volumes have been ordered by members of the University club in Baltimore, through their attention being called to these volumes by copies sent to the Club for the period of a fortnight by the Enoch Pratt free library. Christmas book exhibits in places as widely different in population as Washington and Perth Amboy have led to many purchases. The work of the Johnstown, (N. Y.) public library in connection with its exhibit of Christmas books under the supervision of Miss Mary G. Fiance, the librarian, is worthy of especial note. The exhibit there consisted of about 200 volumes and was noted in the most favorable way in the newspapers of

the town, one of which said: "these exhibitions have been very popular in former years, and many people looked forward to them as a means of keeping in touch with the latest and best works for the home library and gifts to children. The librarian sums up the results of the exhibit as follows: "A large proportion of the visitors took the names of books for the purpose of ordering them. Some people who had never thought of a difference between a good book and a poor one received a suggestion as to the kind of books worth buying. There is no very good store in town where the better books are shown, so the book-lovers were glad of the opportunity of seeing some of the more recent books from which to make a selection. Attention was called to the books in such a way that a desire was created among our readers to get hold of them when they were again in circulation. In spite of the general depression in business, the local dealer reported a marked increase in his sale of books. The Library's hold on the people was strengthened, one evidence of this being the gift of two books each listed at \$3.00 which came as a direct result of the exhibit."

Your Committee was also desirous to get into closer relations with booksellers, and consequently wrote the Secretary of the American booksellers' association, asking that we might be permitted to attend their convention and speak on the relations of libraries and booksellers. A courteous response was received and the members of the Committee and the President of the Association were invited to attend the banquet of that Association on Wednesday, May 20.

On the morning of May 20, the subject of the relations of libraries to booksellers was presented by Mr Bostwick, followed by Messrs Steiner and Cutter, and a very lively discussion ensued concerning the relations of the two associations. As a result of the meeting, a committee was appointed by the Booksellers' association on Relations to libraries, of which Mr A. C. Walker of Scranton, Wetmore & co.,

Rochester, N. Y., is Chairman. At the banquet in the evening the greatest courtesy was shown the representatives of our Association, and Mr Bostwick was asked to speak for it, which he did. We hope that the relations thus established may become permanent.

The "Publishers' Weekly" for May 23, 1908, editorially says, "The most notable feature of the convention was the discussion with representatives of the American Library Association," and in its news columns states that "The conference on this subject took up almost the entire forenoon, and the result was gratifying for the reason that both sides had taken each other's measure, and had come to a clearer understanding of each other's position, and the feeling was that though nothing had been specifically accomplished, the way was opened to future possibilities as it had not been before."

The Committee is certain that the effectiveness of its work in the past is shown by the fact that there have been of late a very marked increase in the number of special bargain lists sent to libraries, in the pains which publishers are willing to take to notify the libraries of their new books and in the number of lists which are sent out, of books included in the A. L. A. Catalog.

The problem of the selection of books for libraries has engaged the attention of the English library association as well as our own, and in its "Record" for April (v. 10, no. 4) is printed an important paper upon some difficulties in the selection of scientific and technical books. In the discussion upon this paper the Secretary of the Association said: "The only real solution of the guiding of people as to what to read was the establishment of a Bibliographical and evaluation bureau in London. He hoped it would eventually come into being, under the auspices of the Library association."

We ourselves have felt the need of co-operation among libraries, and feeling that it was very desirable to have cooperation between the British and the American

librarians; our committee communicated with the British association in order to obtain if possible, the basis for concerted action in lines in which such action should be found possible.

The members of this Committee feel that the time has come when the librarians of American institutions must come into closer relations with each other in the matter of buying books. Without such co-operation, it will be impossible for us to obtain proper consideration from publishers and booksellers and it is probable that there may be a substantial increase in the price of books, so that the libraries of America which spend over two million dollars per annum for books will be obliged to pay several hundred thousand more, or to curtail their purchases by from ten to twenty per cent. The publishers and booksellers are united in active organizations with permanent offices in New York City, and have not hesitated to employ learned counsel and prosecute with vigor, both in the law courts and before Congress, policies which they believe will be to their interest. They are prepared to carry on the same vigorous policy in the future. If we are to receive consideration from these bodies, we must show them that we are worthy of respect, that our patronage is worth having, and that we propose to act together in advancing library interests. There have been entrusted to the librarians large sums of money, in great part raised by taxation, for use in the public interest. We should endeavor to see that this money be spent in the most effective and economical way for the purchase of books, yet the appropriation of this Association for the support of this Committee, which has this especial matter in charge, is ludicrously small when compared with the amounts spent by publishers and booksellers. If we are to accomplish any important results we must plan much more broadly for our future work.

Your Committee advocates pooling the purchases of books by libraries; it advocates the employment of a competent agent to make purchases for a group of libraries.

It advocates an attempt to deal directly with the manufacturers of books, and it estimates the cost of this agency at \$10,000 per annum.

The only desideratum for the success of the plan is loyal support by the libraries of the United States. The expenses of the agency could be paid from a commission upon the price of the books ordered through it, which commission would be only a fraction of the amount saved. But this result can only be accomplished by libraries uniting together.

This association carries with it an influence not approached by any trade association; its members have no selfish motive in discussing such a question as that of book prices. Its position as the largest single buyer of books in the United States should carry with it enormous weight in effecting the character, as well as the price of literature.

We are convinced that the publishers and booksellers can be induced to look with favor on the above plan, were it carefully worked out. We have the advantage of being certain and prompt in payment. We have the advantage of knowing what books are read most largely by the public. We can practically assure the success of a certain class of books. We can assist in the sale of books through the local bookseller by exhibiting the newest books to the public.

Respectfully submitted,
BERNARD C. STEINER,
Chairman.

The PRESIDENT: You have heard this important report and if you will examine the official program you will see that the Program committee decided that some discussion perhaps of an enlivening nature was necessary at this point. Therefore I shall ask Mr W. P. Cutter to move the adoption of the report and to open the discussion.

Mr CUTTER: Mr President, I move the adoption of the report of the committee, and in that connection I have a few remarks to make:

The manufacture and sale of books is not in any particular essentially different from the manufacture and sale of any commodity. There is nothing sacred about the business. It is no more holy in its practices than any other business. It should receive no more and no less consideration than any other business conducted in the same way.

On the other hand, all public spirited persons, and especially librarians, the largest users of books, should give fair treatment to the manufacturer and dealer in books, and should wish each to make a fair and just profit.

The cost of a book to the publisher is made up of

1 The amount paid the author

2 The cost of manufacture

- a Typesetting
- b Proof reading and corrections
- c Stereotyping
- d Paper
- e Presswork
- f Illustrations
- g Binding

3 The office cost

- a Reading mss. submitted
- b Editing
- c General office expenses

4 The cost of advertising and selling

- a Printed advertising
- b Circularizing and postage
- c Storage, cartage, shipping

5 Miscellaneous cost

- a Legal expenses, including legislative expenses
- b Incidentals

6 Depreciation of plant and stock, and stock left on hand—Interest on investment.

It should also be understood that only an uncertain percentage of books published are successful, and that the successful book must pay for the unsuccessful one.

All the above expenses must be paid, and the book must be sold to the retailer or jobber, at such prices as to yield a fair profit.

The ordinary new novel for example is sold to the bookseller at from 40 to 46

percent discount from the list price of \$1.50, or at 81 to 90 cents. This discount varies, depending on the quantity purchased. It is sold by the retail dealer at prices varying from 95 cents to \$1.20, depending on the standing of the purchaser, and the amount of local competition.

The controversy over the price of novels to the consumer is not between publishers, but between booksellers, as it may be generally stated that the amount of discount given by any one publisher is practically the same to all dealers, except that large purchasers are given a small additional discount.

The development of the so-called "department store" has resulted, however, in the sale of books at lower figures by certain of these stores, and hence there has arisen a difference between the large store which sells books incidentally with dry-goods, furniture, boots and shoes, jewelry, groceries and hardware, and the smaller store which sells books incidentally with stationery, flags, brass ware, souvenir spoons, magazines, pictures, frames, artists' supplies, newspapers and athletic goods. In other words, it is a controversy between the large firm and the small firm.

The retail bookseller has made every endeavor to force the manufacturer of books to prevent the sale of books at any lower price than will yield a profit to the small dealer. In other words, he has attempted to prevent a person who has bought a book from the manufacturer from selling it at whatever price he sees fit.

The manufacturer must of course, have a market. He believes that in the smaller towns, the sale of his books depends largely on the success of the local bookseller in pushing them, and therefore, purely as a business policy, he has endeavored to listen to the demands of the local representative for a control of prices, and especially the prevention of price-cutting. True, some publishers claim that they support the local bookseller in his position on account of the educational work done by the bookseller in uplifting the literary taste of the community. I do not personally believe that the

average bookseller has at present much influence in this direction; at any rate, he has slight influence in the aggregate as compared with the public library and the public schools. I do not believe that under present conditions there are ten per cent of the books sold in the smaller cities and towns that are circulated by the public libraries. Certainly, of the non-fiction books, the public library has become to be the chief exponent. It is probably with this fact in mind that these books have been sold to public libraries at a lower price than to the public, as well as that the library buys largely and is good, if slow pay.

I was perhaps wrong in stating that books are like any other commodity. There is one essential difference. The manufacturer and retailer of sugar, steel rails, clothing, must adjust his prices as to meet competition, for anyone can make sugar, steel rails or clothing. But the manufacturer of books is in a different position, as he may purchase the sole and exclusive right to manufacture the book, the raw material for which exists only in the brain of one person. The copyrighted book corresponds exactly to the manufactured article based on patents. There are books, of course, which anyone can manufacture, such as atlases, cyclopedias, anthologies, dictionaries and compiled works, as well as the works of authors whose copyright, if it ever existed, has expired.

The public library, as I have stated, is responsible for the dissemination of knowledge as contained in writings not fictitious, to a greater extent than the local booksellers. Many of these books could never have been published, were it not for the demand created by the public library. To increase this influence as much as possible, the libraries in many instances issue special lists of selected books, and the American Library Association is now issuing a general list.

The libraries and the publishers are alike interested in having reliable information about forthcoming books available to the libraries at the earliest possible moment.

The publishers, because such information helps to make quick sales and these sales serve to indicate the probable future sale of the book. The libraries, in order that they may keep the public well informed and that they may place before the public the best editions, or the best forthcoming book on the subject; and, from the commercial side, that they may select, from the reference works or the sets of standard authors, those editions which are most valuable from a mechanical standpoint, in order that they may remain in good condition for circulation, and in a condition sufficiently dignified to circulate to a discriminating public.

The publishers of books should realize more strongly the immediate influence of the public library. I can speak from direct knowledge when I say that the library under my charge is a potent influence in not only directing the literary tastes of my city, but is the direct cause of the purchase of books by private buyers. On the other hand, the advice given by the librarian has in some cases prevented the sale of fake subscription editions, poor atlases and encyclopedias and books of trifling value or decidedly low moral tone.

I approach the subject of the mechanical side of the book with diffidence. The publishers, I am convinced are willing and anxious to furnish special library editions of books, on good paper, in a special binding, were they convinced that it could be done at a profit or even if they were insured against loss. Their attempts in this direction have been disheartening, as only a small proportion of small editions have been sold. It costs more, not only in money, but in time, to get out such an edition.

This leads me once again to indicate the necessity of better publicity for new books. The advertisements sent out by the publishers are too numerous, have too much on them, lack essential information and lack uniformity. They do not serve their purpose, which is to sell the book, and they fail because they fail to attract the attention of the librarian.

The cooperative list issued by the American Library Association fails likewise to serve the purpose. It is much more practical than the publisher's advertising matter, because it gives accurate information. Its weakness is rather in the delay in noticing new books, and in the small number of books included, as well as the trifling character of many of the books selected. The delay is, I suppose, due to the isolation of the editor from the publisher's offices; the small number, to the expense of publication and the time necessary for compilation; the trifling character of the entries, to an attempt to cater to the small libraries, who buy only a small number of books. The A. L. A. Booklist deserves much commendation, but one must realize its shortcomings.

The trade lists of books are on the whole more satisfactory, in that they are more prompt in noticing books, but they express no opinion. But what is wanted is promptness, completeness, and fairness in expressing an opinion, not only of the literary value, but of the mechanical workmanship. When I am buying a jackknife, I not only want a well-shaped blade, a comfortable handle, and so on, but I want good steel and good honest workmanship. In the case of the jackknife, the maker's name is the guarantee of mechanical excellence. I regret to say that this is not true of the printed book.

There has been much criticism on the part of librarians as to the prices they are forced to pay for books. They claim that in many instances they are too high. The booksellers, on the other hand, claim that there is no money in selling new books, even to the public and that the added discount to libraries makes sales to them not only profitless, but a distinct financial loss. Why should the publisher not sell direct to the library if this is the case? Who would be harmed by such action? If a book sold by the publisher to the dealer at 81 cents, and by him sold to the library for \$1 nets the dealer only a loss, why should the publisher not sell direct to the librarian at 90 cents, or fur-

nish a special binding at \$1? The dealer, on his own statement, would lose nothing, the publisher would gain something and the library would get a better book for the same price. If it is not true that the bookseller sells to libraries at a loss, he is misrepresenting the facts to us. If he is selling at a loss, he is foolish.

The bookseller had only a trifling influence in bringing about the purchase of books by libraries, or in assisting in a wise selection. Few librarians, frequent bookstores and fewer booksellers suggest valuable new books to libraries. The publisher, therefore, in dealing with the library direct, loses very little in the advertising value of the local bookseller, as far as library sales are concerned.

The aim of this paper is to advocate a closer relation between the manufacturer of books and the library consumer, a relation that should have, not merely a commercial side, but should be of mutual benefit in other ways. The system of purchase through the medium of a bookseller has been the stumbling block that has been in the way of these relations in the past. Until it is removed, there can be no progress.

Now, what does the publisher want? (1) A fair profit. (2) Accurate information as to the character of books demanded by libraries and their mechanical makeup. (3) Exact or approximate information as to the number to prepare for libraries. (4) A quick and sure way to call the attention of librarians to the books.

What does the library want? (1) A fair price. (2) Books of a literary character and mechanical makeup suited to library needs. (3) Early and reliable information as to forthcoming books.

In only one of these is there any divergence in the needs. The publisher wants to know the library demand. But this would not be so necessary except in the case of special editions, and special bindings, although in works of a serious character it would be of some value. At present, through the retail bookseller, he neither has any method of knowing in ad-

vance except in a very general way, the sale to expect, nor can he tell how many copies are sold to libraries. The special library editions have not, as far as I know, been pushed by a single bookseller.

It would be much more impossible to estimate in advance the sale of any edition if some person was hired to do it. Without criticising the efforts of the committees on Bookbuying and Bookbinding of the American Library Association it is manifestly impossible for them to devote sufficient time to do any such work. But the investigations of a salaried man would soon result in a standardization of library wants.

I confidently believe, and I speak from a somewhat extended experience, that in the long run, volunteer cooperative work accomplishes little. Such work at the beginning is done with great enthusiasm, at a pecuniary sacrifice to the collaborators, and the immediate result is good. But after the first flush of enthusiasm has passed, the work deteriorates and it must, if continued, be paid for, and sufficiently well to ensure good results.

The libraries of the United States, according to the best obtainable information, spend over two million dollars a year for books and periodicals. It is probable that at least one third of this amount is spent for new books, and current periodical subscriptions.

A saving of ten percent on the purchase of new books would net the libraries of this country \$100,000 a year on new books alone, and \$250,000 or \$300,000 on total purchases.

Probably only a small percent of the librarians present have absolute decision as to selection and purchase of books for their libraries; at least, their suggestions must be submitted to a book committee; this is the theory. But practically, any librarian of any personal force has practically the decision as to purchase, and any sensible board of trustees would support any movement to make economies in purchase.

What I have thus far said may seem

theoretical. Now let us look at the conditions which confront us.

Now, my propositions, in answer to such action, are two in number and alternative in character. I claim no originality in either of them, as they have both been suggested by the committee of the Library association (of Great Britain and Ireland).

Whitcomb House
Pall Mall East, S. W.
9 June 1908.

W. P. Cutter, Esq.,
Forbes Library,
Northampton, Mass., U. S. A.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your letter of May 25, 1908, I had better give you a very brief resume of the action taken on this side in regard to net books.

On 27 February, 1907, a Conference was held at 20 Hanover Square, W., convened by the Library Association, and attended by 150 delegates of libraries and library authorities from all parts of the Kingdom. The following resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority:

1 That this Conference, representing various public and other non-commercial libraries of the country is of opinion that the present system of net book supply presses most unfairly upon these institutions, which exist for the public benefit, and urges upon the Publishers' Association the desirability of allowing special terms to be conceded to this class of buyers, the justice of the demand having been already recognized by the Publishers of the United States of America.

2 That a Committee of this Conference be appointed to bring the foregoing resolution before the Publishers' Association.

3 That in the event of the reply of the Publishers' Association being unsatisfactory the Committee is instructed to prepare and submit some scheme of cooperation among public libraries.

The Committee referred to in above clause (2) of the foregoing resolution was duly appointed, and this Committee was successful in arranging a conference between four of its members and a small Committee of the Publishers' Association. This conference took place on May 9, 1907, when the representatives of the publishers, after giving a courteous hearing to the arguments put forward on behalf of the libraries, undertook to report to their Association and communicate their views to the Associated Booksellers, and on hearing from them, to reply to the Honorary Secretary of the Library Association.

A letter from the President of the Publishers' Association was received, dated 26th June 1907, stating that the matter had been by them referred to the Associated Booksellers with the suggestion that "a small discount should be allowed on Net Books on the understanding that the discount on subject books should also be limited;" and that this proposal having been discussed by the Associated Booksellers at their General Meetings on 1st June 1907, it had been unanimously decided "it was most undesirable to make any exception to the Net Book rule." The letter from the President concluded: "While I hope that our discussion has relieved us of the suspicion of any prejudice against Public Libraries, I can only express regret that it has not enabled us to meet the wishes of your Association."

The irreconcilable attitude taken up by the Booksellers having thus rendered it impossible for Public Libraries to obtain through the Publishers any relief from the steadily increasing burden imposed upon them as buyers of books by the net book system, it remained for the Net Books Committee to give effect to the third portion of the above Resolution, viz. to prepare and submit some scheme of cooperation among Public Libraries.

The fact that a scheme for cooperation among Public Libraries was being prepared was referred to in the discussion on the Net Books Question opened by Mr Councillor Abbott at the Annual Meeting of the Library Association in Glasgow on 19th September 1907, and it was there unanimously decided that the matter be still entrusted to the hands of the Net Books Committee.

The fact that joint action by Public Libraries was under consideration having thus become publicly known, the Net Books Committee were in November 1907, approached on behalf of the Associated Booksellers with the suggestion that a Conference between the Committee and the Associated Booksellers should be held in January 1908, with a view, if possible, of finding some common ground of agreement. This suggestion was cordially agreed to by the Net Books Committee who, in view of the proposed Conference, deferred further action in regard to this scheme pending the proposed Meeting.

The Conference was held on 17th January 1908 and was officially attended on behalf of the Associated Booksellers by the President and five Members of the Council, and on behalf of the Libraries by five Members of the Net Books Committee. As the result of a lengthy discussion an offer was made on behalf of the

Libraries to accept an arrangement that the terms for the supply of books to the Public Libraries of the country should be on "net" books a discount of 10 per cent and on "subject" books a discount of 33 1-3, the definition of a Public Library to be a Library open to the Public free of charge and vouched for by the Library Association as coming within this definition.

The Committee of the Associated Booksellers undertook on their side to approach the Publishers with the view of ascertaining whether they would allow to Booksellers an extra discount on books supplied to Public Libraries and then to submit the whole question again to their Association. The outcome of this Conference was a letter dated 6th March 1908 from the President of the Booksellers stating that "it is the unanimous opinion that no discount should be allowed off net books."

The negotiations briefly outlined above make two points, in the opinion of the Net Books Committee, abundantly clear, viz.:

1 That although many booksellers supplying Public Libraries would be willing to grant to them a discount upon net books the Associated Booksellers as a body is at present irreconcilably opposed to granting any relief to Public Libraries from the increasingly onerous burden imposed by the Net Book Agreement.

2 That while the Publishers' Association is not averse to some modification of the Net Book Agreement in the direction of a discrimination in favor of Public Libraries, as matters at present stand, no alteration of this agreement can be hoped for without the concurrence of the Associated Booksellers.

The Committee will meet to consider a draft scheme which has been prepared for supplying public libraries from a central bureau next week. This scheme, if approved, will then be sent round to the various public library authorities, and on the response to it will depend any further action taken.

I am sure that any proposals from your Committee in the direction of cooperation will be welcomed by the Committee on this side.

The Booksellers are relying upon the fact that the publishers will only supply any such bureau under the terms of the net book scheme, such bureau thus being unable to grant terms to libraries more favorable than those of any Bookseller. We have however, we believe, met this difficulty as well as the difficulty of public authorities taking shares in any company.

At present of course the details of the scheme are confidential, but as soon as we have decided upon the lines of future action I will write you full particulars in order that you and your Committee may know exactly what we are doing.

With kind regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

L. STANLEY JAST,

Hon. Secretary,

Net Books Committee.

1 The libraries may decide individually not to buy any books which are published with a control of the publisher of the selling price, whether this control is called "fixed price," "net price," "restricted price" or by any other name.

The following letter is from the librarian of a public library in this country:

May 5th, 1908.

Dear Mr Steiner:

I have read with interest Bulletins 34 and 35 of the A. L. A. Bookbuying committee. There is no doubt in my mind but that, without considering fiction and some lines of technical works, the greater portion of new books published, or seemingly published, in this country are bought by libraries. Being, as it were, wholesale buyers the net system with its 10 per cent discount is notoriously unfair to them. Besides there was an obvious breach of good faith on the part of the publishers. When they started the net system they promised to reduce the basis price. Have they done it? No, and never will as long as we allow them to squeeze us. The first two volumes of H. M. & Co.'s "History as told," etc., cost me \$1.50 each—the last two on the net plan \$1.80 each. On even my small purchases I can count up a loss of \$100 a year. I acknowledge that, up to this time, I have been in the habit of buying new books as soon as issued and "taking my medicine," but I am perfectly willing to join in a combination of all the libraries of the country to refrain from buying these books until the "protection" is removed. Sporadic cases of refusal to buy would have no effect—but a combined agreement of all the libraries in the country not to buy on the 10 per cent plan might give the publishers an idea of who are their purchasers in reality. What think you?

Yours faithfully,

I say individually, for any general agreement not to buy such books might fall within the restrictions of the Sherman

anti-trust law. The objections to this are manifest:

a It would separate our public from the American author.

b Few librarians might have the courage, and many librarians could not convince their trustees of the wisdom of such action.

c The result would be to subject us all to criticism from book-dealers, from book-publishers, from authors, and from the public whom we serve.

2 The libraries in this Association might organize a cooperative buying plan, with an agent, open an office, and place all orders for new books with this agent. I strongly and heartily recommend this plan for your consideration. Let us see what such an agency could accomplish.

It could arrange for the advance reporting to the associated libraries of such books as are suitable for library purposes, giving a literary characterization of the book, a description of its mechanical features, and ascertain, if librarians would properly respond, the probable number desired by libraries. It could quote prices for special binding, and arrange for special editions. It could, in cooperation with a similar agency in London, call attention to English editions of books by English authors, and import such editions where better or cheaper. It could suggest special books needed by libraries, and reprints which libraries would buy. It could recommend editions of standard authors which were most suitable for library purposes, and procure them in such number as would ensure low prices. It could keep in touch with books which had been used by the commercial circulating libraries like the Book lover's library, Mudie's, and the Times book club, and keep track of the remainder, rebind and reprint market. It could save libraries a large part of the work of their order clerks. It could keep in close touch with the trade in second-hand books and the auction sales, and serve in a measure as a clearing house for overstocks. There is no reason why it should not act as a special agent for bind-

ing library books and periodicals. It could import books, new and second-hand, from foreign countries.

I can already hear the usual objection to this seemingly utopian scheme.

1 It can't be done. It is impossible.

How about cooperative printed cards? Is that scheme a success?

2 There is no money to pay for this work.

I think that, once started, any sane business man would be wild to get the chance to do this work on a commission basis. Let the libraries once agree to pool their issues in purchasing, and agree to do so for three years, and I will agree to find someone to take the financial responsibility, providing the libraries will give the loyal support which should be given to any scheme to save money. Let 100 libraries agree, and it would be feasible. Let 50 agree and it would be possible.

Let me take a few examples of what could be done:

A book now costing \$6.75 in this country was imported for \$1.69; one costing \$4.50 was bought second-hand for \$1.20.

Volumes of periodicals for which the subscription price was \$3.00 per annum were bought in morocco binding, two volumes for \$2.00.

A set of an encyclopedia which was published two years ago can be bought for half price.

Children's books, new, which some of you pay \$1.00 for, can be bought for 40c.

One publisher estimates the extra cost of library binding on edition work, done as per the specifications of the Committee on Bookbinding as two cents per volume. No one estimates it at a greater cost than 15 cents, and one firm has published several books in this binding at 10 cents extra cost.

I am willing to stake my personal reputation on the feasibility of a central purchasing agency, if libraries will pay the agent one half the amount saved from present prices, and I know of several men who would be only too glad to take up the matter as a business venture.

But this should be done by this Associa-

tion. It should have an agency in New York City, where the publishing and book trade interests are centered. It should pay the expense, to save for the constituent members the enormous amount which can be saved. As the recognized purveyor of literature to seventy millions of people, it should no longer conduct its most important business in the most slipshod, expensive and careless manner, but take up the purchase of the additions to libraries in as business like a manner as possible, and cease wasting money in unnecessarily extravagant methods.

Mr Cutter's motion to adopt the report was duly seconded and carried.

The PRESIDENT here assumed the chair and an address on the Future of the library business was given by Mr J. L. GILLIS of the State Library, Sacramento, California.

(As Mr Gillis spoke without notes and the stenographer failed to report his remarks they cannot be reproduced for publication)

There was next read by title a paper by Dr CHARLES McCARTHY.

THE CITY LIBRARY AS A BUSINESS INVESTMENT

Mayor Brand Whitlock, in a recent number of the "Saturday evening post," June 6, 1908, quotes De Tocqueville as follows:

"Local assemblies of citizens constitute the strength of free nations. Municipal institutions are to liberty what primary schools are to science; they bring it within the people's reach: they teach men how to use and how to enjoy it. A nation may establish a system of free government, but without the spirit of municipal institutions it cannot have the spirit of liberty."

If this is true, and we shall grant it at once if we are true believers in American institutions, then I propose to show, in a manner no one can refute, that the city library should be the most important institution in the city.

Let us first consider the question of the city library as a municipal institution, dealing not merely with the affairs of men,

but more in its relations with the welfare of the community and the public good.

The problem of the city and its needs, is greater and more difficult as years go by. Let me quote Brand Whitlock ("Saturday evening post," June 6, 1908) again; he says:

"The American city is a modern economic phenomenon, in its rise and growth and development the last wonder of the world. In 1790 but 3.3 per cent of the whole American population dwelt in cities. In 1830 the percentage had grown to 6.7 per cent, in 1860 to 16.1 per cent, and with the industrial impulse that followed the Civil War populations increased so rapidly that to-day 40 per cent of our people live in the cities. This is the average the country over; in the Eastern states the proportion is larger. The mayor of New York City, for instance, represents more people than Washington did; and states like Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois are about half urban in population. In the present century it is estimated that New York and Chicago must ultimately shelter populations of nearly fifty millions, with corresponding increases in the smaller towns.

It is seen, therefore, that the city is ultimately to exceed the state in importance. Indeed, it exceeds it to-day in importance. The states have no longer any ethnic or economic or industrial reason for separate being, and such differences as once existed passed away with the Civil War. State lines have become artificial boundaries, like those of counties, and serve little purpose other than to block out administrative jurisdictions. But the city is a reality, not an artificiality; it is the result of economic laws, it takes its roots deep in industrial relations. It is an elemental thing—"as elemental," as Charles Ferguson said the other day, "as a beehive or a beaver's dam." Hence, the statesman, the economist, the moralist, must take first into account the city; for America is to rise or fall with the city. The industrial and social problems have been postulated in cities, they must be worked out in cities; on their solution depends not only the future of city people, but of great people who dwell without the city. The city is the battle-ground of the future; it is the dense, compact masses in the big towns who are to justify democracy."

Our libraries deal largely to-day with the women and children, but no one suffers to-day from poor government like